

OMEN gets naked 

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For the third issue in the 50th Volume of the Omen on Tebruary the Twenty-ninth in the Year of our Lord 2008

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To get swoll like Dan H

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Getting chicks For her asthma

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To be Palestinian body-builder

Ananda Valenzuela

To scare people away

Elena Petricone

For science!

Velarian Frances

Barry Bonds told him to



Submissions are due on alternating Saturdays before 5 P.M. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, semaphore, or email. Get your submissions to Lindsay Barbieri, Merrill B103, Box 0542, lkb06@hampshire.edu

> "I was trying!" - Lindsay, on typing "naysayers"

> Front Cover: Alex Wenchel and Evan Silberman Back Cover: Lindsay Barbieri

February 29, 2008

# EDITORIAL: DEMOCRACY

by Evan Silberman

I'm not exactly the Omen editor, but Jacob is busy Samoa, there would be a public outcry and the working on his Div III and Lindsay is getting excited about Supreme Court would be quick to declare the her birthday (she's turning five!) so I have taken it upon myself to write this issue's editorial. So...think think think... what can I editorialize on?

Oh, how about Community Council, and how they are changing the way they are elected? Does this seem odd to anybody else? As far as I know, Community Council's be doing. They're not disenfranchising anyone, of existence and composition is specified by the school Constitution. (Yes, we have one. No, I haven't read it. But that's OK, because you haven't either.) And yet somehow, Council has decided that it should elect its members differently, and will hold elections by residence in the fall in addition to the election of at-large members. While this seems like a Good Thing to me, I think it's absurd by birth month. that Council is attempting to change the terms of its own

Argument by analogy: Article I, Section 2 of the U.S. Constituion provides for the election of the House of Representatives by the people of the several states. If Congressed tried to pass a law saying that the House of Representatives would be elected by the people of several of the states, like perhaps just Nebraska and American

whole thing unconstitutional. The mode of election of Representatives can't be changed except by Constitutional Amendment—which, notably, is not the prerogative of the Representatives themselves.

Yet this is what Community Council seems to course, but they are changing the rules of how people run for and are elected to Community Council. This is a clear conflict of interest. Who knows what devilish machinations Alex Torpey is setting in motion with this change? Maybe next spring we'll hear how Council has decided to have their members elected

Aside from all that, we have a cracking good issue of the Omen for you. There's at least eight thousand words of rambling about how Hampshire really ought to work-even more if the Re-Rad people got us their Div I proposal by deadline. There's a comic about a pregnancy test. There are poems about Peter Pan Buses. Maybe, if you are lucky, you will find within these pages a taste of joy. But I doubt it.

The Omen is a biweekly publication that is the world's only example of the consistent application of a straightforward policy: we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that are not libelous. Send us your impassioned yet poorly-thought-out rants, self-insertion fan fiction, MS Paint comics, and whiny emo poetry: we'll publish it all, and we're happy to do it. The Omen is about giving you a voice, no matter how little you deserve it. Since its founding in December of 1992 by Stephanie Cole, the Omen has hardly ever missed an issue, making it Hampshire's longest-running

Your Omen submission (you're submitting right now, right?) might not be edited,

and we can't promise any spellchecking either, so any horrendous mistakes are your fault, not ours. We do promise not to insert comical spelling mistakes in submissions to make you look foolish. Your submission must include your real name: an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views. (Note: Views expressed in the Omen do not necessarily reflect the views of the Omen editor, the Omen staff, or anyone, anywhere, living or dead.)

The Omen staff consists of whoever shows up for Omen layout, which usually takes place on alternate Saturday nights in the basement of Merrill on a computer with an extremely inadequate monitor. You should come. We don't bite. You can find the Omen on other Fridays in Saga, the post office, or on the door of your mod.

The Omen Haiku

Views in the Omen (5)

Do not necessarily (7)

Reflect the staff's views (5)

Volume 30 • Issue 3

## OMENOMENOMENISSUE.03OMENOMENOMENSECTION.HATEOMENOMENOME

# Semi-Random Rants From the pen keyboard of Dan Michelson

The inspiration for me to finally deliver on my recurring threat to complain about things to the Omen was a poster I saw this evening. I don't remember the exact wording of it (I considered taking it for reference, but it seemed impolite), but it was from antianimal testing activist (or group). There were some good points and some bad points, but the most irritating argument was that animal testing is not useful for determining the effect of medications on humans. Consider the two sides. Activists claim animal testing is not useful for medicine. Doctors and medical researchers say it is. Maybe it's just me, but I think people who are actually knowledgeable about medicine are more likely to be correct.

In the previous issue of the Climax, Mo Karn wrote a column promoting Ron Paul. Now I must admit that I stopped reading her editorial a few sentences in, after she made an argument for isolationism that wouldn't have convinced Senator Taft over sixty years ago (ten points for anyone who actually gets the reference). Now there are plenty of good reasons why Ron Paul is a terrible candidate (he wants to abolish the Department of Education, etc.), but one simple fact disqualifies him. Ron Paul is a U.S. Congressman who believes that Abraham Lincoln was wrong to engage in the American Civil War. That's right. It is 2008 and a man running for the highest office in the land publicly admits that he would have backed the secessionists and slaveholders in the 1860s.

Does anyone know why the mailroom is locked on Sundays? Yeah, yeah, I know they started doing that last year, I've been busy. Unless there was some problem with vandalism or something I don't understand the purpose, and it can be quite inconvenient. Speaking of which, go up the (long) library stairs and read all the graffiti in the stairwell. If it doesn't make you depressed about the sensibleness of the student body, you're probably part of the problem. NEWSFLASH: Graffiti is not automatically "art." Scrawling juvenile political slogans on walls does not make you Picasso. Actually, there seems to be some sort of law that decrees that the shorter and more public a political statement gets, the stupider it gets. The same force is at work on bumper stickers. Not coincidentally, neither has ever convinced anyone of anything,

To finish, two things that really piss me off.

1. Overuse of the term "fascist."

Fascism is a particular ideology. Academics argue over whether certain dictators, such as Franco or Peron, were fascist Disagreeing with you does not make a person fascist. It is also not a synonym for conservative. George W. Bush is not a fascist 16 you think he is, you don't know what fascism means.

2. People who think the United States Government (or elements of it) were behind the September 11th attacks.

I've seen the "Loose Change" video that some people are so fond of. I can safely say that I have never seen a worse video. My aunt once showed me an Australian "documentary" that claimed the U.S. Army was secretly testing nuclear weapons in Western Australia. It was still more reasonable than the "Loose Change" video. I seriously don't understand how people can look down on people who don't question the crap they get from Fox News, yet swallow even more outrageous tripe when it comes from an ideologically friendly source. DO SOME GODDAMN RESEARCH PEOPLE! (And don't e-mail me to say that you've done plenty of "research" on prisonplanet.com and other conspiracy sites, that's not what I mean.)

I probably won't be bothered to do another one of these things, unless for some strange reason people actually want to read me complain, as well as listen to me (I'm the scruffy looking white guy in the back room of SAGA who is either talking too much or reading). Anyways, if you know the answer to the mailroom mystery, have any comments, or want to explain why I'm a fascist, e-mail me at dsm04@hampshire.edu or just come talk/



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### Things We Hate - by The Omen Staff - Things We Love

Wet socks.

Peanut butter.

Sparkles.

Uncreative Spam Mail.

Pessimism.

Optimism.

Calamari.

The Climax.

Nay-Sayers.

People who have birthdays every year.

Re-Rad.

People with no heart(s!?!?).

Not Re-Rad.

Pop up ads.

Clothes.

Flaws.

Hatred.

Stupid People.

People who think they've been abducted by aliens.

This list.

Daleks.

LaTeX.

Microsoft Word.

People who don't submit to the Omen.

The Yurt.

People using vocabulary words they don't actually know. People who draw sad faces on our arms.

Peanuts.

People who make mistakes.

Dead Baby Jokes.

Cigarettes.

Marijuana.

Humor.

lov.

Christmas.

Fake tans.

People who steal computers, underwear or diamonds.

(Specifically Ninjas)

Comic Sans.

Death.

Lack of instantaneous transport.

You, Unconditionally.

Ourselves, Often, (See, it's a masturbation joke ...)

### Hampshire:

#### Repercussions of Political Correctness by losh Marchan -

Josh waited. The lights above him blinked and sparked out of the air. There were bigots at the school. He didn't see them, but had expected them now for years. His warnings to the Administration and the Student Body were not listenend to and now it was too late. Far too late for now, anyway.

Josh was a Hampshire student for 3 and a half years. When he was young he watched the college students protest and he said to dad "I want to be on the college daddy." Dad said "No! You will BE KILL BY BIGOTS" There was a time when he believed him.

Then as he got oldered he stopped. But now in the extremely liberal white upper-middle class private hippy college, he knew there were bigots.

"This is Manfred" the radio crackered. "You must fight the bigots!" So Josh gotted his soap box and spewed bad rhetoric. "HE GOING TO KILL US" said the bigots "I will debate at him" said the white, open-minded, progressive student and he tried to support Josh's cause in his own way.

Josh hated at him and tried to expel him out. But then the zinc ceiling of the film building fell and they were trapped and not able to debate.

"No! I must expels the bigots" he shouted

The radio said "No, Josh. You are the bigots"

And then Josh was a Hampshire Activist".





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### A Vindication of the Rights of Students by David Axel Kurtz

I am a college student, a Hampshire College student moreover, and I believe that I would be failing myself as such were I not to direct my best analytical abilities towards my education & all of its parts. This I think most particularly appropriate in regards to the establishment in which I am enrolled & participate, as it is the arbiter of my education certainly, & the guide and assistant thereto in all supposition. Even did I feel full satisfied by the opportunities offered to me by this institution I should still be remiss were I to do anything but subject it to the rigor of the substantive criticism I might. As I am not within a very great distance of being satisfied thereby I have no difficulty in finding my motivation

In this I do not pretend to speak for anyone else. I speak only for myself. I am confident in this that I speak with the voice of at least 1/1430° of the student body. That is all.

In order to analyze this learning environment of mine, I must first learn to understand it as best as I am able, and satisfy myself that I am taking the best possible advantage of its opportunities (both those offered freely and those which might be extracted only under severest pressure). This I have done to a rather great extent, not the least of which as this is my fourth semester enrolled herein. Then I must picture an ideal learning environment for myself, & see how these two things differ. Thirdly I would be failing my community if I did not take into consideration the other 1429 portions of the aforementioned fraction, for this place would hardly be meet with my educational needs were it not so for all my fellow students. It is no mean task, but I shall do with it as best as I am able.

It is the necessary goal of this college (as I would hope. perhaps vainly, with other colleges likewise) that it secure for its students, for each student individually, a learning environment in which they might flourish. This would mean an educational system in which they might be able to learn at the greatest speed, & to have their understanding of the given topics delve to the greatest possible depths, the aggregate of these two things being what I would call efficiency of learning. They must be able to learn, they must wish to learn, their learning must be assisted, and their learning must be rewarded - each to a level that would make Aristotle blush and Oxbridge blanch, should things be structured unto this pedagogic Omega-point. To argue how best to accomplish this (for example, to judge the quality of one form of Div I over another based upon its relative success in accomplishing this goal) is one discussion that might be had. Yet I would say that it is a second-order discussion, which presupposes that such a place - such an infinite and indiscriminate Socrates' Garden - is indeed what we consider the omega-point for our institution of higher Yet though it does sound hard to argue with, such is not necessarily our pedagogical intent.

In the aforementioned statement the primary contentious word is a simple pronoun. I argue that a college ought to exist for its students, whereby it seems that it is anathema to most of modern cademe to say that a college's pedagogy ought to be intended to support anything short of all students, current and potential both. Such a statement, concerning the function of education being to welcome all comers in equal warmth and dedication, certainly has been said frequently enough by certain members of the Hampshire administration & faculty both, as well as no shortage of students currently enrolled herein, and all without seeming to draw a great deal in the way of protest from teachers or students either.

It is a lovely sentiment. It does not judge and it does not discriminate. It is the practical embodiment of many of the philosophical ideas upon which our professors base their classroom exercises. It is a dandy post-berrida Dharma-despotic derring-do and it sounds wonderfully fit when found on an admissions mailing or a report to the Trustees or an accreditation committee. Yet it does not have the monopoly on quality; though its goals might be noble, the quality of its implementation is still subject to debate.

I suggest that were we to earnestly attempt to be all things to all people, we would find ourselves host to all people, or at least such an even cross-section of the general population that our students would be on the whole no different from those at any other school – Oberlin, Bennington, Stanford, Harvard, the University of Vermont, the University of Massachusetts, the University of Texas, et cetera. The majority of the people in this country attend schools with grades, lectures, majors, minors, multimillion-dollar football teams, fraternities, sororities, quizzes, tests, and student-caused fire alarms on exam days. The majority of people in this country do seem to flourish under such an environment. I am not one of them. I do not see Hampshire College as being required to pander to such individuals. Indeed I see Hampshire as existing for quite the opposite purpose.

We are not a University, I argue, and therefore have no responsibility to being Universal. Moreover, are we to commit to such a thing, it is a burden which shall instantly break the back of our experimental (dare I say, radical?) educational philosophy. Our diploma will no longer carry the weight of Hampshire diplomas of old, for Hampshire will no longer be the college of old. Instead of being a first-rate institution outside of the mainstream, it will be a third-rate institution inside the mainstream; and even if it is able to salmon its way up that effluvia to eclipse in the popular mind Harvard and MIT and Yale... it will still only have succeeded in becoming the triumph of a different educational model.



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To me, this other pedagogic structure, this University mindset, of which the Ivy Leagues are most the most commonly considered apogee, is ineffectual, is indifferent, is inefficient, is insipid, is insulting ... it is, in short, even in its highest expression, considerably less than the equivalent fulfillment of the living and learning goals to which we now currently aspire.

Or to which we purport to aspire.

No, I say, it is Hampshire's mission to offer, not all things to all people, but a very specific thing to those people to whom that thing shall be the most benefit. So long as there are approximately four hundred new students every year who will so benefit, the institution is a success. We are a failure only if, on the one hand, we cease to provide for our niche, or on the other, our niche disappears.

I am not an expert on demographic forecasting, especially in such a vague and misty area as regards the educational desires of nascent prefroshes. Yet I cannot think that the latter is likely to occur. In fact I see it only just beginning.

To state the history of Hampshire College in the bluntest, most economic of terms: it was seen that there was a niche market, and so a package was designed to capitalize thereupon. That package was this college, and it has survived as such for the better part of half a century — much longer than a fashion trend, longer even than a generation. I suggest that the market for which this offer was created does still exists, and that it still demands an institution to cater to it. Therefore it is still profitable for us to do so (even if such profits are not primarily expressible, nor ought they to be, in units of specie — we are, after all, a college, not a business, despite what opinions might be held by certain individuals within & associated with our college).

Therefore it ought to be our goal to deal with this demand, and provide that which we originally set out to provide. Let me say this as clearly as I am able: I believe that Hampshire College ought to provide for only a certain type of student.

To attempt to argue about what sort of student for which we seek to provide is futile until this is accepted. Yet I am going to suggest that this ought to be our core belief – that even if all are created equal, as I would postulate, by the time we get to be high school seniors we be damned if we ain't different, and not necessarily separate but equal' in any way, and that furthermore only some such matriculating teens are best to be Hampsters. If you are not this sort of person – if you will not benefit from, and be of benefit to, the Hampshire community – be you a student, an administrator, a staff member, or a teacher – I see no reason why you ought to be allowed to become part of the community.

After all, we are an elective community. Twofold we are: people must elect to apply to be a part of our undertaking, and we must then subject their application to the most rigorous scrutiny we are able, that we might then determine who amongst those applicants ought to be allowed to become part of our community. This is again equally true for anyone regardless of whether they are applying to be a student, a librarian, a creative writing guru, a Spanish teacher, a Yoga instructor, a president, a secretary, a trustee, or a pub.

Unless we let in everything, we must leave something out. And unless we attempt to do this through some sort of stochastic process, such as playing pin-the-tail-on-the-application, we must have a standard for choosing what to allow into our community.

This is not the place for post-modernist eschewing of value judgments. We must decide that this is what we want and that we wish to stay away. To define those terms will not be an easy job, but

somebody has to do it. Or else we shall simply become a formless blob of infinite acceptability: UMass Hampshire, or Amherst College of Art, or the site of the new Smith greenhouse, or a permanent exhibit of the Mount Holyoke art museum on the disappeared days of radicalism in education.

Thus we come to triage; the schism; the cut. Rather, we must define what it is we seek from those we choose to become part of our community.

The ways in which we might make such trimmings are already in place; we have taken them from every other major undergraduate institution, substantively whole. We have the college application process for students and an (certis) equivalent procedure for professors. I expect like procedures are in place for staff members of various sorts & I am certain that the Board of Trustees machinates in some sort of accepted fashion.

And so as is form, it seems, so has become our function: for at the moment, we seem to be judging our applicants (that is, deciding which of them are allowed to become part of our community) based primarily upon what-everyone-else-is-doing.

A friend of mine, a first year Division I, was unable to convince Central Records that he ought to be allowed into a class marked 'limited to Div II students only.' They were only convinced of his argument when he quoted his SAT II score to them. Thus not only was a non-academic body responsible for determining a student's educational opportunities, their criteria of choice for that determination was his performance on a standardized test.

This is fully understandable, as we have not defined for ourselves any specific qualities for which we are looking; so of course, how, then, could we look for them? Thus we simply cling to those things for which everyone looks – ability to write a 500-word essay, high school grades, SAT performance, et cetera and well past nauseum. We have clung to them so long and have clung so much harder every year, every semester, every day, that they have become de facto and are in grave danger of becoming de jure as well. I suggest that arguments concerning what tests to which we wish to subject these applicants are utterly without meaning until it is that we know for what we are looking; though we may, once we determine what we desire in a student, decide that many of these facets of our application are fair measures to determine to what extent an applicant meets our criteria for admittance, and therefore choose to retain them as part of our applications, until such time as we have determined this criteria they are as words whispered in a vacuum: deaf, mute, and alone.

Perhaps the school will determine that the best way to secure for itself the sort of people who will most benefit it, and most benefit from it likewise, is through requiring the taking of SATs and their ilk. I do not believe that this is likely, but it is a possible result of such an argument. Yet at the moment there is not even the argument to have. Thus I am little surprised it is not in any way shape or form reaching a resolution.

I would say that the same must go with professors. If we have no objections to them teaching gut courses, then those professors who apply to us for teaching positions will be those who have no objections to teaching gut courses. I say that the sort of professor who would be content doing such a thing is not the sort of professor we want teaching at Hampshire, and that therefore, Hampshire cannot cannot cannot be content with allowing such courses to be taught. No more, should I say, than it should be content with allowing students to matriculate here who would be content in taking them.

I have difficulty with any academic program whereby the value of a

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class is determined without input from the student. In a world where all classes are of equal weight, there is no incentive provided not to major in Home Ec. A friend of mine took a 1-credit UMass class, meeting for, I do believe, one hour per week. They got together and cooked; it was upposedly designed as an elective for those going into food service or event planning. But because Hampshire counts all courses equally, this friend received as much credit for that class as he did for completion of Organic Chemistry. I postulate that this ought to be allowable, but ought NOT to be mandated. Nothing at Hampshire ought to be mandated, or not at least equally to all students. For I can easily see a situation where that food service class was worth more to a person, challenged them more & was better taken advantage of by that student, than would Organic Chemistry to that student have been. The fact that in the above my friend was certainly not such a student, and Orgo required of him a good few hundred times the effort, to a good few hundred times the productive result, is the crux of the matter. One system for all is a Justice which is not blind, but looks at everyone, though 'equally,' and as such has a leveling gaze which is the precise antithesis of anagogical encouragement in education.

Hampshire cannot attempt to offer equal educational opportunity to those who wish nothing more than to nod off in the back of a lecture. We cannot offer to those students who want grades, not at the same time as we offer to those students who do not so desire. I say that Hampshire College best look for those students who do not flourish under traditional academic systems where such things are de rigeur. I don't care if you got straight As in a private prep school and scored in the top 5% as regards your standardized tests. Half the kids with whom I went to high school did that and more, yet I cannot think but more than a few would flourish in a truly Hampshire environment. In fact, I know full well that many if not most of them are more than content to let college slide by, putting in the precise minimum of effort, their slide enhanced by such wonderful lubricants as Budweiser and ski wax utilized as if they were paid to do so, rather than as though they were themselves paying for the privilege.

I do not want such people around me, certainly not in a classroom, nor, indeed, outside of it, any more than is required. I want the place around me to be specifically designed to keep such people out. I will say it: I believe that hard, creative, productive work is better than sleeping through a class as an anonymous undergraduate, cramming for a test, passing it, and then returning to dormant complacency. No, this is not every college student I describe, nor even does being such an undergraduate guarantee that you will not rise to great heights (even the Presidency does not seem barred to such a student). Yet they are not the sort with whom I wish to study. They are not the sort who will contribute to the intellectual atmosphere in which I will flourish. myself to continue to do so down into life beyond.

what I want. I speak for nobody else; I speak for myself alone.

I want students who are intellectually curious, independently

they are able. I want students who believe that grades are an inefficient and insufficient way of expressing a student's progress. I want students who wish to be evaluated, and such to be done based not only upon the absolute level of knowledge they have attained, but upon also the other things they have taken from their studies, such as analytical tools and methods of criticism, such as might be called, not knowledge, but wisdom; that they might be evaluated based upon the effort which they brought to their studies, the actual products which they produced, the goals they accomplished. That their education might be holistic - that is, pertaining to a whole - and not simply a sum of its parts, or worse.

I believe that to a rather great extent we have students who are so well motivated and who are motivated towards such things. They exist at Hampshire now, in fair number, and they continue to exist in the pool of those who are applying to college. Therefore let us move to the other side of the balance, the educational side, the Hampshire side I want Hampshire College to offer those students who wish it the ability to engage in substantive independent work, faculty-supervised and faculty-encouraged and most of all faculty-assisted but never facultydirected or faculty-dictated. I want the faculty at Hampshire College to collaborate as equal partners with students in determining that student's educational path, on the assumption (wild as it may sound, he says with voice heavy with sarcasm) that a student might actually know at least as much about their own educational needs as a professor whose acquaintance they have only just then made. I want that student and that professor to be able to come to an equitable understanding as to what they wish to accomplish, with each participant in such negotiations being in possession of equal power to determine the fate of their energies.

As it stands now, such an equitable relationship does not exist. Students are required to fulfill certain requirements (expressible, in essence, as credit-hour requirements) towards their advancing within the college and, ultimately, their matriculation. There is little reward within the system for them going above and beyond, even more scarcely if they are not yet Div III; as Div Is especially, they must do nothing but satisfy the completion of a number of classes, and as Div IIs this is as well the rule rather than the exception. To go above and beyond in a classroom setting is not necessarily rewarded; indeed, in my experience. it is often punished most harshly. Professors, conversely, are not encouraged to assist such students who wish to go above and beyond. particularly outside of the classroom; if they offer two classes or if they do that as well as facilitate two hundred independent studies, they are not rewarded therefore; if a student takes one workload or another, they are not really rewarded therefore; and if either opts for the easier rather than the harder path, they are not punished whatsoever thereby. Even were they able to competently & to the satisfaction of all consummate working as hard as I am able, working as well as I am able, and preparing such a Herculean workload, they are offered no carrot; even if they coast by like a puck on an air hockey table, there is no stick to provide negative Enough beating around the Bush, then: let me be specific as to reinforcement for their dereliction of duty. This criticism does not even begin to address inter-class performance or requirements.

Moreover, as there is little incentive for a professor to offer to a self-motivated, and ready to wring from such as Hampshire as much as student any independent work, particularly in the first three years that

If you think I am going to continue looking for good pullquotes in this thing you are crazy. There's no time for that. We have to lay out the fucking Omen.



# FNOMENSECTION.SPEAKOMENOMENOMENOMENOMENOMENO2.29.080MENC

student is at Hampshire, so too have the students no power to bargain student is a student is a student with a wondrous and make demands themselves; therefore, a student with a wondrous and make used a wondrous independent study proposal, upon which they shall work exceptionally hard & are likely to make exemplary progress, might be unable to find hard & are to find faculty member willing to supervise and reward that study, or even a faculty accreditize it - thus either requiring that the student, perhaps guite to their own detriment, alter their study, that it might appeal to the professor in question, else pursue their work upon their own time. without the benefit of professorial supervision, and without the benefit of reward (in the form of credit) for their efforts.

There is likewise little attempt within Hampshire to diversify its courses to meet the various needs of its students. I have been in many situations where the material being covered in one particular class period was nothing which was alimentary to my education, yet I was forced to attend & listen with great frustration to reiterations of data which I already possessed, for class attendance was unilaterally mandated. In such situation, where demand for the course, on the part of the consumer (the student), is so utterly mandated, there is little reason for a professor to even attempt to tailor their class to their students, thus supplying them with what would be to their best educational advantage.

It is argued that there is such a range of courses offered to students that if a student is unhappy with one course, they should simply switch to another. If indeed the alternative options were meet with my educational needs I should be very happy therewith. Even if we offered courses of great challenge in every subject are - which to me as a student, we certainly do not, not at all, nowhere near - this would only be pure coincidence, as the courses would have come about without any input from one half of the involved parties (or nineteen twentieths. in a class of twenty, if you wish to see it in a more brutely quantitative fashion). Moreover I suggest that this logic is the pure equivalent to telling a student that if they are unhappy with the total educational opportunities available to them here, they should move to a different school. Thus we are brought again to determine what sort of school we want this Hampshire of ours to be, in comparison to others: do we want it to offer no more than an introduction to various topics, rigorously prestructured and with substances mandated - or do we want it to be a place of learning and flourishing to the greatest depths possible?

As far as entire classes themselves, the diversification requirements found in the Div I program require that many students take classes in which they have little interest, or which are taught at far too basic a level to suit their levels of education in a given subject. In a class I recently attended, a first class of the semester, the professor queried the students as to their reasons for attending his course. More than fifty percent gave as their reason, quite openly, the fact that attendance thereof satisfied their diversification requirements. One even mentioned the satisfaction of their Div II chair's requirements for them. This was a '200-level' course containing some second- and third-year students. I may as I agree with their sentiments, & can hardly criticize them therefore. Given the opportunity I should not have chosen to take one of the courses in which I was enrolled as a Div I; yet between the requirement that I take courses, the requirement that I take certain types of courses, the requirement that I take certain levels of courses, and the limitations of such courses as were offered, the choice was between that and defying Shaq & not staying in school. Thus in many cases it was not the attendance of one class or another, but of an entire course, which did

nothing to advance my education, whatever the interest or passion I had for the subject matter, and whatever efforts I made within the confines of the courses themselves.

I have difficulty with any Division 1 program which assumes anything about incoming students, & treats each of them as one ideal (or less than ideal) First Year. Even if ninety per cent of first-year students have, as many teachers have suggested either to me or within my earshot, insufficient writing ability for a collegiate environment, or even if ninety nine per cent are so lacking, the resultant one per cent must be properly cared for. There must be a way to allow for their advancement when they have neither completed courses nor 'college-level work' to use to support their case. There must be a better way to support their assertions of their own prosaic abilities besides the traditional method of 'testing out' of requirements.

In this instance I believe it is of paramount import that the school as a whole err on the side of freedom, & give its students the option whenever possible to both determine their own abilities, & to raise those abilities as well as the student's estimations thereof. This comment I would say is equally applicable to Division II as it is the prior Div, & from what I can hear I expect it may be applicable as well to the third

At present, I have not found that any Hampshire courses in which I have been enrolled, even for a day, or even those that I have audited, or so much as visited, have seemed to me to be meeting my educational needs. This includes 300-level courses, courses in all of 5 of Hampshire's departments, classes at other colleges, and even to a fairly great extent such independent studies as I have been able to secure for myself. Yet still I believe that the courses I have thusfar attended were the best courses available to me: I have visited dozens upon dozens of classes, & strictly observed the coursework and homework of students attending many more, yea even into the highest levels of courses, & still I have not found any that I was passionate about attending. They may have been courses in subject areas about which I am particularly passionate, but few of them covered the subject in a greater depth than I had myself, or than I could in a few days' concerted independent study.

Have I been able to make these courses work for me? Yes, of course I have. I do research and reading on my own time, outside of the syllabus or the confines of the classroom. I do writing and work on my own time, outside of the assignments given to me. I try to get what I can out of the class, even though my time in the classroom would usually be better spent in the library. I am rarely rewarded for any of these efforts, that is, from my professors or within the confines of the course; more often than not my academic standing is jeopardized by this going 'above and beyond, and as such my activities are all but punished. I have found that not a few of my professors have failed to live up to their promises in regards to a course, even such as have been freely stated by them on their course's syllabus. I have, in short, been academically disappointed by college, unfortunate as I am here almost to the exclusion of all else for

To attend the classes would not be of great benefit to me, and the homework assignments as were given did not seem to be evaluated in any way which would cause my knowledge of the subject, nor the ways in which I approached that subject, to be substantively improved. This is of course true more or less, depending on the class, but I still have found nothing which comes close to challenging me, nor allowing me even to

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challenge myself. As such, for my educational needs to be met requires either that a course with substantively different requirements be offered, or that courses allow and reward independent work far beyond what they currently so do, or that independent work be allowable entirely outside of a formal classroom environment.

It would be nice, likewise, if my professors actually read my assignments. Some of them have done so, cursorily; on some occasions, with some professors, I have been able to engage them in substantive discussions. Likewise on occasion I have been able to begin substantive discussions in a classroom with my fellow students. Perhaps it is entirely that I know not how to so do, that I do not know how to take advantage of what has been offered me, that the fault, in short, is mine; yet I assure you that it has not been through a lack of attempt on my part, no not at all, that I have failed to so do.

To satisfy the first of these three would not, I think, be even a very successful palliative measure; for to have a professor provide a rigid syllabus, entirely without consulting the students to whom he or she is teaching as to what they desire, nor without attempting to get to know those students so as to determine what would be best for those students apart from what they consciously believe would be best for their educations, is a pedagogical failure, even if within that rigid syllabus there is room for 'independent' work. It is not enough for the courses to exist, floating as in a void; they must be tailored to those students who take them as much as their nature is determined by the professor who teaches them. Else one is attempting to fit into a round hole a potentially square peg; or worse, as many as two dozen pegs, each of a different shape, none of which is round but none of which is identically square to any other.

Thus successful completion of a course will result in conformity, whereas anything less will result in poor evaluations and a great deal of frustration on the part of both faculty and student. I believe that such is the situation in which many if not most of our students now find themselves, and not a few of our professors as well – and I for one, in many of these situations, think much higher of those students who by remaining introspective, evaluative, and aloof of their surroundings, are driven to distraction, whose academic standing is jeopardized, and who are still not expending their time nor their efforts efficiently, as opposed to those students who forsake this more difficult path in favor of easy academic rewards and professorial approval down the path of blind acceptance and, in too many cases, an equal lack of education therefore.

If a course were not simply offered in general, that students might or might not flock to it as is their wont, but were rather collaborative efforts between student and teacher, that I think could not but be best for all concerned. In order for this to be accomplished, professors must be either required to comport themselves & their classes in such a manner, under pain of some sort of punishment (for such it would be), or else they must be specifically rewarded for so doing - I would like to think that employment at Hampshire College is that reward, and dismissal that punishment, but I doubt such is practicable, not certainly if the creation of such a system is placed, as it seems at the moment to be, solely in the hands of those very faculty. Too rare are the individuals who are able to vote to end their bread and circuses, especially if to do so would require them to acknowledge their lack of perfect success in their professional comportment. Yet as such does not seem to be the case at the school, some form of carrot or stick or both must be brought into use, or not only shall things not improve, I can only see things continuing to fall apart until we are nothing of our former selves any longer.

The third thing, then, is independent studies. Yet I fail to see how an independent study is so very different from a course, if it is one in which the students have input in the requirements and offerings thereof. An independent study is simply a course with one person; it does not have to be any less rigid in its demands, nor any less educationally rewarding to the student, than does a course containing many students. Likewise an independent study does not necessarily have to contain only one student; a group independent study might very well be as large or larger as a formal Hampshire course. The difference between independent studies, then, and courses, as Hampshire stands now, is entirely moot. A course at Hampshire might be entirely mutable based upon the desires of the students, whereas at the other end of the spectrum a course might be the picture of prefabricated SAT-prep rigidity; the same is true for indies. The only difference between the two is the way they are laid out on The Hub; the fact that one is offered as-is, and the other requires negotiation, is made manifest only due to The Hub and the desires of (most) professors.

This, then, is what I would like to see at Hampshire College:

All courses at Hampshire College are built in collaboration between students and teacher(s). Within a single course, the expectations from one student might be different than the expectations of another; after concluding what it is that the students wish to cover in a course, each student shall formulate a contract with that teacher, regarding their mutual requirements. Each student will complete the work which that student, in concert with that course's professor, believes to be the best for their education; they will then, at the conclusion of the course, be evaluated based upon their completion of their contract, both in their eyes and in the eyes of the professor.

Should twenty students all wish to study essentially the same thing, in the same manner, produce the same things to that end, and be judged in the same way at the conclusion of their studies, then they might all sign a single contract, and participate in something which would then be essentially identical to what is now a Hampshire course. The difference is, they will be taking what they want to take, in the manner which will be most rewarding to them; they shall be taking an active interest in their education, both substance and form; and they shall not be directly penalized for saying to their professor that they want for more challenge, that they are unsatisfied, that they are bored, or for (worst of all) attempting themselves to offer kind, constructive criticism to their superiors.

Should a similar group of students all wish to study different things, or study the same thing but in different ways, the class might either be broken up into groups, each of which might meet with the professor solus, or else each student might go their own way entire, and the course then be as one central meeting-place for all these disparate modes of learning; it would be a place where the disparate might focus, rather than a place where the disparate might be forced to branch out, though they branch out each independently, to do so in the exact same manner as all their peers, none of whom might necessarily be satisfied thereby. Thus a classroom would not be a place for the treatment of twenty students as if they were one; it would be a meeting-place for twenty-one individuals, namely, twenty students and a professor all.

Should a smaller group of students desire the professor's guidance in an independent study, it could be striven for that they be included in a larger class, either of individual projects or similar groups, whether that class is already established, or it would need to be established; else they could work entirely outside of the classroom with that professor, and their project should go on in that respect.

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Should a single student desire a professor's guidance in an independent study, it could either be attempted that the student be included in one class or another, one either already extant or one which would attempt to organized thereafter, if sufficient students have shown interest in such a thing; else that student could meet with the professor indevidually, in the manner of a current independent study, as often or as little as the project requires, as determined by the student and the professor in open and equitable discussion.

In this way will the requirements and the offerings of a course be In this way will each and every student be able to learn the most and to the greatest depth, to produce their best work and the work which is most relevant to the course, and then be able to be judged according to his or her effort, product, and learning all.

his of her trudents who are allowed to enter into the college will then be chosen based upon which of them seems most likely to benefit from the above. The professors who are allowed likewise to enter into the college will then be chosen based upon which of them seems most able to facilitate the above. And should any of either prove unwilling or unable to do their jobs, either as students or as teachers, it should be our pleasure to help them transition to more rewarding places of study as soon as is humanly possible. With, if necessary, a friendly push away.

Thus to create a Hampshire College in which I might flourish. Thus to create a Hampshire College in which I might flourish to my fullest potential. Thus to create a Hampshire college in which those who desire to learn and to work in this self-motivated, self-responsible, and self-rewarding way will be able to do so to their fullest potential, and be most strongly supported and encouraged in their like pursuits thereof.

To secure such a situation, whereby every Hampshire student might be able flourish most fully and all who are not might be able to become other than a Hampshire student, these I do declare are the Rights of Students, necessary, fair and sublime:

- I. To be able to gain entrance into Hampshire College without discrimination against our appearance, ethnicity, beliefs, sexual orientation, or the like
- II. To be treated within Hampshire College no worse for being different of appearance, ethnicity, beliefs, sexual orientation, or the like, from any other Hampshire student or member of the Hampshire community
- III. To be unable to gain entrance into Hampshire College without being committed to our own education, motivated to learn to the best of our abilities, motivated to produce to the best of our abilities, and committed to allowing and facilitating these same things to be sought by our peers, that is, each other
- IV. To be unable to gain entrance into Hampshire College without the ability to flourish in a situation which offers the freedom to selfdetermine and which rewards self-actualization
- V. To be unable to gain entrance into Hampshire College if another applicant demonstrates or suggests themselves to be, according to clearly available criteria of evaluation, more able to flourish and benefit from what Hampshire College offers
- VI. To be encouraged at all times, once admitted to Hampshire College, to learn as much as we are able, to achieve as much as we are able, and to challenge ourselves ever more, thus both to fulfill our potential and to work at all times towards its expansion
- VII. To be treated once within Hampshire College as individuals with

individual educational desires and individual educational needs, and to have those desires and needs be respected by all members of the Hampshire community

VIII. To be given opportunities within Hampshire College's academics entirely based upon our potentials, motivations, and requirements, regardless of our age, academic standing, or any other factor of our background that would allow us to be prejudged without specific accuracy

IX. To be allowed within Hampshire College to work with students whose specific educational needs and desires are near our own, so that we might always be challenged as much as we may and we will likewise be able to meet those challenges, together, to the best of our collective abilities

X. To be allowed within Hampshire College to work with professors whose areas of learning, interest, and whose personalities and educational styles, are most meet with our own educational desires and needs, to the best possible fulfillment of our potential

XI. To be able to interact with our professors, openly, deeply, and without risk of our academic standing, so long as we each comport ourselves with scholarly respect and so long as we each bring our best efforts into play in such discourses

XII. To be able to take advantage of the presence of our professors and the other resources of this college no more or less than any other student

XIII. To be able to determine, both alone, in concert with our peers, and in concert with members of the college faculty, what we feel is best for our educations

XIV. To be able to negotiate equally and amicably with our professors how to best reach that fulfillment of our educational needs

XV. To be equal members of the partnership which exists between those who teach and those who are taught, neither of them who know infinitely what is best, even educationally, for the other party

XVI. To be able to speak, in a class or anywhere outside of the classroom, without fear of academic penalization, so long as we each comport ourselves with scholarly respect and so long as we each bring our best efforts into play in such discourses

XVII. To be able to work to the best of our abilities, both in classes and other like activities of a curricular nature and outside of formalized curricula, without fear of academic penalization

XVIII. To be able to question what is being taught to us to the best of our abilities without fear of academic penalization

XIX. To be able to question how we are being taught to the best of our abilities without fear of academic penalization

XX. To be able to demand of a professor that they fulfill any agreements into which they have entered

XXI. To be able to have it be demanded of us by a professor that we fulfill any agreements into which we have entered

XXII. To have our progress towards matriculation judged by knowledge we have accrued, the wisdom we have acquired, the works we have produced, and the things we have accomplished, rather than simply

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through the credit-hours we have completed

XXIII. To have the standards for our matriculation determined in consultation with the community as whole, which are clearly stated and easily available to the community as a whole

XXIV. To have our progress towards matriculation determined according to our fulfillment of these educational standards as is evaluated qualitatively by us, in consultation with those professors with whom we have chosen to work in an advisory relationship, rather than quantitatively on the part of any objective or otherwise universal body of governance or regulation.

XXV. To be encouraged to take the fullest advantage of this freedom, as in demonstrated by the quantity and quality of their learning, the quantity and quality of their produce, as is determined both by the student in question and those faculty members with whom that student has chosen to work.

XXVI. To be penalized only for a failure to reach our own potential, not potential as is judged in comparison to any of our fellow students or to some idealized, median 'student' abstract

XXVII. To know that we are attending an institution that exists and is operated, first and last, to aid and roward our learning and betterment

XXVIII. To know that we are attending an institution that exists and is operated, first and last, as much by us as by anyone else

XXIX. To know that we are attending an institution that shall do its best to operate with complete transparency, honesty, justice, and honor at all times

XXX. To lation that we are attending an institution that, at every opportunity, whenever faced with a question, a challenge, or an opportunity for progress, shall err on the side of freedom

and let me be clear in saying that I accuse Hampshire College, both as a whole and in many of its parts, of failing to respect these rights and likewise to fulfill its potential.

If the

As I am submitting this document for publication through electronic means I am not able to place my written signature upon it. Yet let me say that this is a document whose sentiments are such that I have no difficulty in associating myself therewith.

Submitted for Publication Sunday, 17 February, 2008

David Azel Kurtz Hampshire College f06 dak06@



#### Review: Tank Repairman 1942 by Jacob Lefton

It is June, 1941. Europe is burning as World War II rages on. The Axis front has swept through France. Allied forces have pulled back from the mainland and wait, nervously, as the United States contemplates entry. At night, the Battle of Britain lights up the skies of London, but by day, things are calm.

Well, relatively calm. Deep in the workshops of hidden Allied and Axis bases, tank repairmen work with great urgency to get today's damaged tanks back on the field before the next wave of opposition approaches. Amidst broken tanks, spanners, and workbenches, this brave group of individuals does everything they can for the war effort.

What is "everything?" Well, aside from the monotonous task of repairing tanks (which is far cry from boring!) tank repairmen (and women) do a number of things. They have to check and update documentation for every tank that comes in. Occasionally, spanners break, and they have to be repaired (using other spanners I guess!). Toilet breaks are very important for these men and women, and they sometimes even have time to get up and stretch their legs. With the money they earn repairing tanks, they get war bonds—the government in turn uses that money to build more tanks which inevitably end up in the repair room. It's amazing how deep into the cyclical nature of life this game explores.

If the tank repair people are not fast enough, the Axis win. Das Leben fährt fort, wie es vorher hatte, außer daß jeder jetzt spricht Deutsches und kauft deutsche Kriegbindungen anstelle von Englisch. In allen ist es nicht ein schlechtes Abkommen, ausgenommen die Behälterreparaturleute mehr Vermutungen bilden müssen, weil sie nicht die Dokumente wirklich lesen können, die mit jedem Behälter kommen. Es ist im Ende zwar okay, da alle wir den Gewinn der Verbündeten wirklich der Krieg kennen.

Never have I played a more thrilling tank game. I suggest looking it up and downloading it—it's free. The game runs smoothly on Mac OS 10.4

# DOVI 12-14

## David's Wisdom Nook — An advice column by David Mansfield

Wisdom Nook proudly introduces an all-new feature.

The Kinder-Cranny! Finally, the timeless advice of America's most accurate advice column meets the timeless innocence of america's most young people.

DAVID: I always thought that bears hibernated, but my friend and they don't really hibernate. That doesn't sound right to me. It parents and teachers told me that they do. Do bears hibernate? I save been looking hard for answers.

Inquisitive Child Doesn't Understand Bears

DEAR ICDUB: Give your friend a gold star and an affectionate punch on the shoulder, because he is right! Be gentle, though, you only get one pair of shoulders! So does your friend,

Hibernation is a state of decreased body temperature, heart rate, and breathing that resembles a deep, extended sleep. The decreased activity allows the hibernator to live off body fat much more efficiently than they would be able to if they were active. This helps animals survive during times when food is scarce and temperatures are low. Animals that hibernate include bats, budgehogs, ground squirrels, badgers, toads, and some snakes.

While bears are famously known for hibernating, they are not true hibernators. Instead of hibernation, what bears do is called "mauling". You could certainly get away with saying that bears hibernate, but there are some important differences between hibernation and mauling. Instead of lowering their body temperatures, bears bite you many times with the intent of making you die. While true hibernators can be difficult to wake up, bears simply batter you and scythe your flesh using their enormous, deadly claws. Most animals hibernate to conserve energy, but bears maul you because you foolishly encroached on their territory.

Don't think bears are all bad, though! In addition to mailing, bears live in social groups, have an excellent sense of smell, and custure their young. Just don't ask them to nurture your young! In all seriousness, they will almost definitely ext your baby if you zoe it to them. Please do not do this.

To learn more about bears, head to your local library and library and library cout Horatso Jindabyne's Bears Can Only Talk in Movies: Interns Disappointing Evidence, Edgar Atakkle's A Bear Eats Some Technologies: A Memoir, and Sebastian Tisdale's Encyclopedia of Being Mardered by Bears.

That's all for now. For more, visit the archives at davidswisdomnook.blogspot.com.



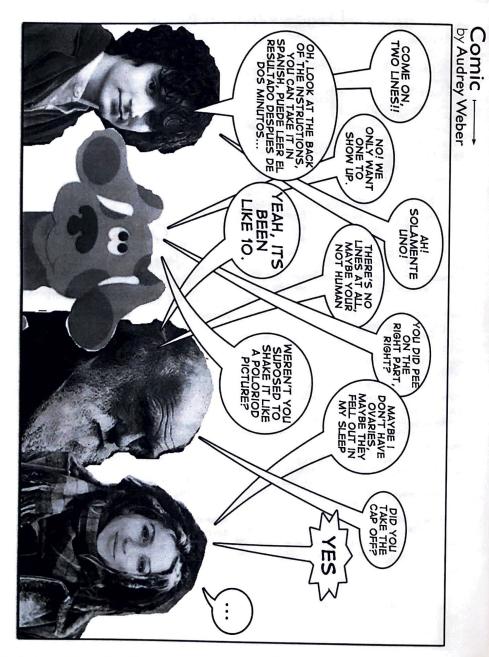
David Mansfield is the author of several self-help books, including Babies Don't Like Everyone, Making Marriages Last, and The Great Big Book of Trains. He currently teaches at Hampshire College, where he is the foremost authority on Roald Dahl's Matilda.

# Ode to the Peter Pan Bus

in three different poetic forms by Claire Catastrophe Broadhead

#### Acrostic Haiku Punks Peter Pan Bus why Why do you toment me so? You smell like B.O. Free form I race the green Anger in their fairy boy Nether Regions through never Undergarments from never Sea to Shining Sea night dreaming of pirates and their endless booty

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# Nate vs. Friendship by Nate "Wooters" Wooters



